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Redistributing the Cake?

Ethnicisation Processes in the
Berlin Food Sector

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Zusammenfassung

Arbeitsmärkte sind durch eine Vielzahl von Merkmalen strukturiert. Ein zunehmend wichtiges Merkmal für die Organisation von Arbeitsmärkten ist - so wird hier angenommen - „Ethnizität“. In den USA wurden die Ethnisierung von Arbeitsmärkten und die ‘ethnischen Enklaven’ seit vielen Jahren analysiert. Auf Europa und insbesondere Deutschland sind diese Ansätze nicht umstandslos übertragbar aufgrund der stärkeren institutionellen Regulierung der nationalen Produktionsregimes und der spezifischen Migrationssysteme und -traditionen.

Im vorliegenden Beitrag wird eine Konzeption skizziert, die die Entwicklung der ethnischen Ökonomie als integralen Bestandteil der wirtschaftlichen Dynamik begreift, die aktuell durch nachhaltige Restrukturierungsprozesse geprägt ist. Die sozialen, kulturellen und räumlichen Dimensionen dieser Prozesse sind - so die These - jeweils durch gleichzeitige, aber widersprüchliche Tendenzen gekennzeichnet. Inwieweit Migranten/ethnische Minoritäten die in dieser Widersprüchlichkeit auch angelegten ökonomischen Chancen zu ihren eigenen machen können, soll in einer international vergleichenden Studie im Nahrungsgüter-Sektor von europäischen Großstädten erkundet werden. Erste fragmentierte empirische Befunde zur Situation und Entwicklung in Berlin sprechen für die Plausibilität des konzeptionellen Ansatzes.

Abstract

The dynamics of the ethnical structurization of labour markets is an important research issue in the US since the early 1970s. The concepts developed in these debates especially that of enclave economies cannot be easily transferred into the European or German context. The reasons are major differences in the national production regimes as well as in migration systems and history.

This paper sketches a framework for research that views economic activities of ethnic groups as integral parts of the overall economy and its dynamics. The latter is actually characterized by profound trends of restructuring. It is one of our central arguments that these developments show contradictory elements concerning social, cultural and spatial aspects. These highly contingent constellations open specific structures of economic opportunities for migrants/ethnic minorities; however, they are also associated with risks. On the basis of this conceptual framework, a detailed internationally comparative study is envisaged with the aim to analyse actual processes in the food industry of capital cities in Europe. First empirical indicators are given for one of the cities of the sample: Berlin.

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Introduction[1]

In this paper a concept is presented for the analysis of ethnicisation processes in urban labour markets and especially for that known in the American and Anglo-Saxon debate as "ethnic business". We are looking for similar forms of labour organisation in Berlin, a capital city and one with a substantial population of recent migrant/ethnic minority origin. The focus is on the (potential) role of migrants/ethnic minorities in the current process of socio-economic restructuring. The paper investigates economic activity in one large sector - the processing, distribution, sale and serving of food. This sector has received particular attention from the outset in the literature on ethnic business (Light 1972) because it has considerable significance in terms of generating both employment and economic resources and as a link with countries and communities of origin. Demand from co-ethnics has provided an opportunity for many to enter self-employment. More recently, the food sector has been particularly exposed to processes of restructuring and globalisation. The role of immigrant labour in the restructuring process has received little analytical attention to date; only a few empirical studies exist. As Parker (1996) shows for New York, ethnicisation is one feature of the ongoing transformation in the fast-food industry, and ethnicity - similar to gender - serves as one basic category of work force organisation in this sector.

The scientific debate on the economic position of migrants and ethnic minorities in urban contexts has often been framed by concepts of enclave economies. So-called enclave economies have been characteristic for the ethnic division of labour in the United States and are well known as geographic formations such as "Chinatowns", "Koreatowns" or "Little Italies" in American metropolitan areas. Self-employment of immigrants and minorities, especially in the food industry, is one major feature of these "districts".

As regards Berlin, we argue that the economic activity of migrants and ethnic minorities has expanded beyond the enclave economy and is now significant in meeting mainstream demand, too. We believe that more widespread entrepreneurial activity is a strategy to cope with the deteriorating employment situation and lack of employment prospects, especially for foreigners. However,

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1 This paper represents the very first steps in a research project on the process of ethnicisation within the context of economic restructuring in capital cities. The conceptual framework was elaborated in a series of discussions that began in late 1995 between Malcolm Cross, Heinz Fassmann, Hartmut Häußermann, Robert Kloosterman and the authors.

We thank Anne Schüttpelz for dilligent assistance in the collection of data and literature.

We are grateful to Frauke Miera for critical comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

whether these activities prove to be an opportunity rather than a trap for those who venture into self-employment remains an open question.

The structure of the paper is as follows. We first highlight recent globalisation trends pointing to three evolving aspects of transformation that have major implications for the ethnic division of labour. This serves as a kind of conceptual framework for the study of current processes of restructuring in Berlin, challenges we outline in the second section. We then move on to the resurgence of self-employment among both the German population and that of recent migrant/ethnic minority origin. After briefly characterising the structure and dynamics of the German food sector we present data and documentation - albeit fragmented - concerning, in particular, the Italian, Turkish and Greek food sectors in Berlin. The final remarks concern the huge amount of empirical research that remains to be carried out.

Globalisation and the ethnic division of labour

Since the early 1980s the post-industrial reconfiguration of economic activities has resulted in a decline in the manufacturing sector, on the one hand, and a significant - though less than proportional - expansion and differentiation of service industries, on the other. This trend was paralleled by rising unemployment figures like in most developed western European countries. Moreover, the emergence of considerable polarisation and casualisation of opportunities for employment cannot be overlooked. The precariousness associated with some new forms of employment relate to features such as temporary, often part-time, jobs, low pay, low skill requirements and a weak degree of unionisation.

There is growing evidence that as a consequence of economic restructuring and internationalisation the opportunities for employment - especially in major cities - are becoming fragmented and divided in new ways (Sassen 1996). Some sections of the population are more likely than others to experience increased levels of deterioration in working conditions. Citizens from non-EU countries and people of recent migrant origin are one such group. They are disproportionately affected by unemployment and they are also over-represented in the more insecure types of employment. However, the recent developments have also had significant implications for the opportunities of migrants/ethnic minorities in some sectors, particularly those where self-employment and "ethnic entrepreneurship" has been possible.

The existing literature on ethnic business and the role of ethnicity for the organisation of labour is of American origin. Basically, the literature proceeds from the assumption that ethnicity is used by the immigrants themselves as a tool for economic advancement within an enclave (of spatial nature, such as

Chinatown, Koreatown or Little Italy in New York) or within the context of the majority labour market. Certain features such as particularly hard working conditions, including low wages, long working hours and paternalistic employer-employee relationships, are reported by most of the authors (Light 1972, Bonacich 1973, Light and Bonacich 1988); moreover, the restriction of immigrants to specific sectors of the labour market is evident. The strong tendency of minorities and immigrants towards self-employment in the food sector is often described and has been explained mainly in the context of the consumer-demand theory. Most authors stress the importance of "ethnic solidarity". While authors like Zhou (1992) consider the ethnic enclave to be a privileged basis for the integration of Chinese immigrants into the American economy and as a promising route to assimilation in the sense of the melting-pot, others, such as Sanders and Nee (1987) and Kim (1996), are much more sceptical about the positive effects of "ethnic solidarity". However, some minorities have in fact succeeded in establishing ethnic niches in the majority labour market. Waldinger (1996) cites the example of the Black Americans, who have been able to gain a firm foothold in the public sector since the 1980s. The corpus of literature on ethnic business is fragmented and often restricted to case studies, which for a long time did not include "gender" as an important analytical category (Howell and Mueller 1996). Hillmann (1997) concludes that the American scientific debate on the role of ethnicity in the American labour markets is best summarised in terms of three theoretical approaches: the enclave approach, theories of restructuring and - more recently - also ghetto studies. Debate on "ethnicity" as one organisational principle of labour markets is only now also arising between American and European researchers in European scientific literature *(*see special issue of *new community* 1996, Vol. 2, No. 4).

Because of the strong bias of the available concepts towards the situation on the American labour markets with their "liberal" tradition, the European debate needs to give much greater consideration to the highly regulated frameworks on the continent. This is why we start with a short overview of the history of immigration in Germany and Berlin.

In the initial decades following World War II the widely shared stereotype of "modernisation" had focussed on unidirectional processes such as fewer companies, larger size, higher capital/labour ratio, scale economies, more sophisticated skill demands and standardised employment. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were viewed as a transitory anachronism. Indeed, the role played by large firms in an economy was taken as an indicator of economic development (Storey 1996: 47). Contrary to these expectations, the number and importance of smaller enterprises is increasing in practically all developed economies, and a parallel intensification of ethnicisation processes cannot be overlooked. Small firms and likewise ethnic businesses are now more important as providers of goods, services and employment than was the case twenty years ago. As a matter of fact, in Europe there are more workers in microenterprises with less than ten employees than there are in large enterprises with 500 or more (op. cit.: 49).

The fact that the SME sector has regained economic strength after a long period of stagnation or even decline is only one example of contradictory contemporary trends. The current industrial and post-industrial changes need to be disaggregated and non-economic dimensions included in order that their implications for the transformation of employment regimes and especially for the new ethnic division of labour can be considered. It is our conjecture that globalisation processes have three dynamic elements, which we shall term "cultural", "spatial" and "social", each of which is significant for the opportunity structure of migrants/ethnic minorities. Each of these aspects contains antinomies with clear implications for the reconfigured labour market in major cities.

Cultural transformations

Globalisation entails a pattern of *standardisation*. The emergence of transnational corporations seeking to standardise products, integrate markets and fashion tastes to enable cross-national supply standards is a hallmark of the globalised economy. Food products and food consumption are cutting-edge indicators of this transformation. Although frequently referred to as the rise of "fast food" and *"McDonaldisation",* the strategy represents more of an attempt to enhance profitability through product standardisation than a quest for smoother service delivery. The product is packaged in a standardised sales pitch that transcends the individuality of both employee and consumer (Leidner 1993).

As employees, migrants and minorities are profoundly affected by the growth of these food retail outlets. Standardisation is intended to deskill food preparation and with it the costs associated with craft production. Wage levels are heavily constrained by transnational companies, which can exploit structural unemployment and which contribute to a casualisation of jobs. Empirical evidence from other countries suggests that amongst the groups affected by this process are a disproportionate number of migrants, very often women.

By contrast, the other side of the antinomy associated with globalised culture is the *fragmentation* of taste and demand. The increased earnings inequality and the associated restructuring of consumption generates a demand in high-income strata for goods and services that are generally produced through labour-intensive methods. Small firms - among them often ethnic businesses - have good possibilities for signing up as subcontractors (Sassen 1996: 588 f.). Moreover, the very existence of standardisation and the presence of ethnic communities in urban centres, which are perceived by some as culturally exotic, helps to generate a growing enthusiasm for "ethnic" tastes. Thus, opportunities are opened to ethnic restaurants and food retailers, which are by no means "ethnic enclaves" catering only to co-ethnics rather part of the front line of a cultural transformation in which the city is the critical locale. The need to remain competitive and to uphold the authenticity of the cultural forms represented in these outlets can lead to enhanced employment possibilities. Indeed, in some settings there are opportunities for ethnic food chains with well-established links to countries and regions of origin.

Spatial transformations

It is widely acknowledged that globalisation has entailed an accelerated process of *regionalisation*. Deindustrialisation and tertiarisation have altered the logic of city formations. Information-processing technologies have not only led to tele-cottaging but also to a search for environmental enrichment in the lives of those employees who still meet in *real* space for work. This is not just a suburbanisation process with attendant commuting; rather it is a post-commuting phenomenon entailing new company-location strategies. The food-distribution sector is following these changes closely because regional consumers are among the most affluent and interested in what the new giant supermarket distributors can offer. Insofar as these developments are occurring in peripheral locations, they have a marginalising effect both on the employment prospects and the consumption options of migrant and minority consumers. This is because these populations are heavily concentrated in those spatial zones experiencing both relative and absolute disinvestment. Low levels of car ownership and inadequate public transport facilities further restrict the opportunities for these communities to participate in the "supermarket revolution".

At the same time, a countervailing force is at work. In the first place there is evidence that regionalisation of indigenous populations has proceeded faster than the regionalisation of jobs. This is a product of a widening gap in income distribution, of changing tastes and of environmental concerns. As this regionalisation occurs, new opportunities open up for ethnic enterprises. Second, big cities take on new, more specialised functions, becoming more significant as focal points for entertainment and leisure industries, which are themselves having to meet an increasingly specialised and fragmented demand. Food consumption is a crucial component of this market and big cities like Amsterdam, London, Vienna and Berlin come to be identified as much with leisure activities as they are with producer services. The opportunities for migrants and ethnic minorities are considerable in this process of *reurbanisation*, which is not confined to leisure industries but may include producer services, too. As far as the food industry is concerned, the effects are not only evident in the restaurant trade but also in the importation and distribution of fresh or preserved "exotic" produce, both for direct retail and in relation to prepared food.

In the American literature spatial transformations of the urban context are often described as "gentrification". Authors like Portes and Sassen-Koob (1987) assume that the growing demand for special goods and services goes hand in hand with processes of ethnicisation in various segments of the labour market. Numerous delicatessens, boutiques and laundries, for example, rely on the very flexible and cheap labour of immigrants and take advantage of an expanding informal economy. Parker (1996) indicates that an ethnicisation of labour organisation is occurring, in particular, in the food sector. The integration of immigrant labour in the restaurant industry is seen as an outcome of changing consumer demand, which also has spatial implications. Whether this function of immigrant labour in the food sector holds equally true in the more regulated economies of European cities remains to be explored.

Social transformations

In addition to regionalisation within countries, globalised economies are also coming together in transnational groupings to defend and promote the benefits of being associated with cutting-edge economic change. Perhaps the most significant grouping is the European Union, which has systematically pursued a policy of transnational integration. One aspect is the removal of internal borders and the reconstruction of external boundaries - a process that has come to be referred to as the building of "Fortress Europe". A social consequence of this transformation is the growing opposition to continued international migration and the drive towards an integrated European policy of either effective limitation of or a shift in labour recruitment from countries of the South to those of the East (Rudolph 1996b).

At the same time, a countervailing force of decentralisation is also at work. This involves the development of a fluid and flexible "new migration" from southern and eastern countries, often built on existing migrant networks. Because of the centralising and regulatory thrust of modern migration control strategies, some of these processes are technically illegal. The very illegality of the migrant flows ensures that workers are well suited for part-time, deregulated and casual employment. Many of these workers are involved in the production or distribution of food and food products, and the international trading arrangements in this sector provide a creative link for the maintenance of migrant networks. A significant proportion of the people involved here are women. There are possible links with the organised smuggling of people either for immediate financial benefit or to supply illegal or semi-legal services (e.g., the sex industry) (Morokvasic 1993). While most migrant networks operate perfectly legally, the illegality or semi-legality of some of this activity introduces opportunities for corruption and *mafiosi*-style organisations. As far as the food industry is concerned, the frequent (often daily) air connections with overseas partners and subsidiaries may provide ample opportunities for illicit trade and money laundering.

Presenting the analysis in this way, it may appear that European and global economic integration and the role of migrant and minority communities are critically interdependent. Product standardisation, regional dispersal and the building of transnational political groupings create a series of negative out-turns for migrants, although they may be crucially dependent on them. The loss of regular, high-wage employment in the cities where migrants and minorities live and its replacement by low-wage, insecure and marginal work is as much a consequence of globalisation as the new hostility towards countries of the South and the East and their populations. On the other hand, globalisation entails countervailing forces marked by fragmentation of taste, specialisation of consumer services and the building of transnational links. It is in these countervailing processes that a new opportunity structure is being built. Migrants and ethnic minorities are key actors in this new situation and *may* be its beneficiaries. In other words, possibilities for social integration and upward social mobility can be both *undermined* and *created* by globalisation and the new international division of labour.

No attempt to explore these possibilities in real situations can afford to ignore the role played by a range of mediating influences. These include, specifically, national policies on employment regulation and, more generally, regulatory frameworks. As state policies become less nationalised through privatisation, regulatory frameworks themselves are critical in shaping empirical outcomes. This is highly evident in the food-production and distribution industries where, under the guise of hygiene or environmental policies, a whole series of constraints can limit the labour market impact of new opportunity frameworks. Social integration through participation as entrepreneurs or employees in the food sector will be mediated by national legislation (welfare system, licensing arrangements) as well as local policy (city regulations, planning guidelines, etc.). Besides ethnicity characteristics such as age, gender and educational level can also be expected to influence the labour market activities of migrants/ethnic minorities in different ways than for the local population.

The challenges of restructuring: Berlin

The tasks associated with the aim of economic reconstruction in order to catch up with the trend of increasing internationalisation are expected to be particularly challenging in Germany and - even more so - in Berlin. One major argument in support of this view is the prominent role played by Germany and Berlin in the Cold War, which also left its mark on the economic regime. The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s opened up (potential) new markets for the city's economy. However, at least some of the economic structures and institutional frameworks were judged to be no longer adequate to the exigencies of the new situation. Moreover, the opening of the frontiers has given rise to new migratory flows (especially - but not only - from central and eastern Europe), thus adding to the stock of migrants/ethnic minorities (Rudolph and Hillmann 1995). Berlin was and is one of the entry gates between East and West. In conformity with more general historical experience, these circumstances of major change have aggravated existing socio-economic cleavages among societal groups; however, they have also generated new opportunities. We will focus our attention on the question as to how well the population of recent migrant/ethnic minority background has fared under these turbulent conditions.

In December 1996 the non-German resident population of Berlin amounted to 444,112 persons, indicating a slower pace of growth than in the previous year (+ 1.9% in 1996 compared to 3.9% in 1995). Residents from 185 countries were registered in the city. The living quarters of the foreign population are unevenly distributed across the town: by far the majority of the foreigners lives in the western districts, concentrated especially in the districts of Kreuzberg (one-third of the resident population is non-German), Wedding (nearly 30% of the population are foreigners), Tiergarten (a quarter of the resident population is non-German) and Schöneberg. Very few foreigners reside in the peripheral eastern districts; here, only between 2% and 4% of the population are foreigners. The more centrally located eastern districts (such as Mitte, Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain) now show much higher rates of inflow of foreign population. Overall, one-third of the foreigners are of Turkish origin (in total: 137,729 persons) and one-tenth comes from the states of former Yugoslavia (in total: 40,393). The third most numerous group are Poles (29,452 persons), constituting 6.6% of the foreign population. Most of the non-EU immigrants are from the U.S. (9,840 or 2.2%) and Vietnam (7,035 or 1.6%). EU citizens make up 15% of the total foreign population and their share is increasing. In contrast, the growth rates of inflows from the countries of eastern Europe and the states of former Yugoslavia slowed down in 1996 (Statistisches Landesamt Berlin 1997).

After World War II Berlin was no longer the political capital of Germany. Moreover, the city lost much of its function as a centre of major national and international business activity. Two main reasons were responsible for this negative development:

- As a "political island", Berlin was cut off from its *Hinterland* in terms of both supply and demand.
- The instability of the political context deterred a number of companies from keeping important parts of their production, services and/or administrative headquarters in the city.

The events of 1989 and the years that followed have brought fundamental changes on the political level. It was of paramount importance - in economic terms, too - that the federal parliament decided in the early 1990s to reinstate Berlin as the German capital.

Until reunification the western part of Berlin had the same legal and institutional framework as West Germany although it was officially designated a "special political entity". This means that the city was part of the highly coordinated market economy that characterises the German socio-economic regime. The exceptional political status of Berlin (West) was instrumental in the Cold War. Huge subsidies were paid out of federal funds to companies, and tax reductions were granted to the working population. As a result, the economic mechanisms of allocation were totally distorted. One aspect of these ambivalent mechanisms was the preference given to highly capital-intensive, low-skill production. When the federal government authorised the recruitment of *Gastarbeiter* in the second half of the 1950s, West Berlin greatly welcomed this new policy as a means of filling large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Berlin's integration in the German migration regime until reunification was similar to that of other German cities: immigration has been reduced since the suspension of recruitment in 1973 to family reunification, asylum seekers, contract workers and ethnic Germans.

The percentage of foreign residents in the western part of the city was and is higher than the national average (in 1995 it was 16.9% in western Berlin compared to 8.5% in 1993 in Germany), but it is still low in the eastern districts (5.3%) (Statistisches Landesamt Berlin 1995) and thus continues to reflect the former division of the town.[2] Compared to other German cities like Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Munich, where more than 20% "foreigners" are officially registered among the total population, this seems to be a modest quota. However, Berlin stands alone as regards the absolute number of foreigners living in the city: in 1994 the respective figures were 249,057 for Hamburg, 280,035 for Munich, 191,805 for Frankfurt and 135,332 for Stuttgart (Deutscher Städtetag 1995). Moreover, certain ethnicities, such as Turks and immigrants from Eastern European countries, are much more numerous in Berlin than in any other German city.

When looking at the current developments in Berlin, it is impossible to differentiate analytically between the effects of regime transformation and globalisation. All the districts of Berlin (and not just the eastern ones) have to cope with the implications of the post-socialist restructuring of the economy. In the midst of this process Berlin is (re)developing as a capital city. The relocation of a considerable number of business headquarters to Berlin is a clear indicator in that direction. Moreover, employment in production-oriented services increased by 53.5% between 1989 and 1994 (Spee and Schmid 1995).

Despite a short boom following unification, the current economic situation in Berlin is rather problematic. The secondary sector is shrinking considerably (only 19.5% of all gainfully employed in 1994) due to the implosion of socialist

[2] During GDR times relatively few foreign workers were employed in East Berlin; they came mainly from Mozambique, Angola and Vietnam.

Kombinates in the eastern part, while in the western districts the abolition of subsidies for the city and the lure of tax benefits in the new *Bundesland* Brandenburg are the relevant triggers for the exodus of industrial production activities. The growth of the tertiary sector (69.7% of the work force in 1994) is, therefore, much welcomed (see also for the following: Spee and Schmid 1995). The situation on the Berlin labour market today is characterised by several features: the number of employed persons is shrinking, while the supply of labour has remained stable and the population grown. In 1991 the number of employed persons was 1,667,300, in 1995 it had fallen to 1,514,000; this was a reduction of almost 10% in four years (Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Berufliche Bildung und Frauen 1996). In the process of restructuring jobs were mainly created in construction and in the service sectors (banking and insurance, non-profit organisations). Losses of jobs in manufacturing were largely concentrated in the electrical engineering sectors, but also in the food, mechanical engineering, textile, synthetic and chemical industries.

The dual task of reunifying and modernising Berlin's economic structure constituted an enormous challenge for the political authorities, given that the instruments at hand - especially measures of active labour market policy - had been developed for gradual adaptation. It was no surprise that the economic turbulence was accompanied by informalisation processes. The shadow economy appears to be growing, although little serious empirical evidence on this phenomenon exists so far. Estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants in Berlin hover around 100,000 (the total population being about 3.4 million) without giving any indication as to the structure of this group (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, Umweltschutz und Technologie 1995). It may be assumed that the "new *Gastarbeiter* policy" towards central and eastern European countries is contributing - as an unintended by-product - to the growth of this pool (Rudolph 1996a). The most salient example here are said to be the undocumented workers from central and eastern Europe on the huge construction sites in the centre of the city. [3]

Informalisation trends can be observed in other marginal segments of the city’s labour market, too. Activities such as street-trading (often fashion jewellery and food), which for many years had been rather atypical for industrialised

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[3] The construction sector is a significant example of an ethnicised labour market in Germany today. The institution of project-tied employment *(Werkverträge)* is a special provision to fill certain jobs with foreigners, mainly from eastern (e.g., Poland) or peripheral (e.g., Portugal) European countries. There is empirical evidence that an ethnic division of labour has taken place during the recent construction boom in eastern Germany: Italian and other EU-country enterprises have succeeded in acquiring many contracts and tenders (as permitted by EU standards), as experts on the construction sector report. They were able to offer lower prices by importing temporary labourers from peripheral regions. Considerable numbers of workers from Ireland and the UK had to be accepted because of their status as self-employed; they were supposedly paying taxes and social insurance contributions in their home countries.

countries, are increasing since reunification. Car-window cleaners at the traffic lights have mushroomed and flea markets have multiplied. Butscher (1996) observes an ethnic division of labour within these marginal segments: jewellery-sellers mostly come from Latin America, especially Chile, Peru, Argentina and Brazil; food- and snack-selling is largely monopolised by western European, North American and Canadian small (informal) entrepreneurs; and window-cleaning is the domain of east European immigrants, especially Poles. Immigrants from industrialised countries working in the informal labour market often classify their activities as complementary to other sources of income. To label this development as a *tiermondalisation* of Berlin (Butscher 1996: 45), which means a gradual assimilation to the situation in so-called Third World countries, seems rather exaggerated at least for the time being.

However, the direction and speed of the future development of Berlin's economy remain open. Given the forces of internationalisation, the degree of path-dependency of the socio-economic evolution of the city and its metropolitan area can be expected to be weaker than historical evidence would suggest. However, former hopes that Berlin might develop into the financial centre at the east-west/north-south cross-roads have not (yet) materialised.

For Berlin as the reunified capital, even more so than for other big German cities, the most pervasive problem since a number of years is the labour market crisis, which has intensified after a short reunification boom period. This critical employment situation has deepened trends of quasi historical standing. As early as the 1970s, migrants and ethnic minorities were most severely hit by business cycles and economic problems of all kinds both in the FRG and in West Berlin. The rate of unemployment of foreigners always exceeded that of the German work force, as indicated by the fact that the share of foreigners among the unemployed considerably exceeded their share of the work force - and increasingly so. In Berlin the percentage of foreigners among the unemployed was 16.3% in September 1985 but reached 21.8% in September 1993.[4] In 1996 the number of unemployed foreigners in the western districts rose again, amounting to 23.6% of the total unemployed.

The rate of unemployment is rising, presently reaching a higher level in the western than in the eastern districts (16.4% compared to 14.4%). This is due to widespread substitution processes because eastern candidates were willing to accept lower wages than westerners. Migrants/ethnic minorities have to carry an even larger share of the burden.

Table 2: Rates of unemployment in Berlin (December 1996)

	Western Berlin	Eastern Berlin
Unemployment rate	16.4%	14.4%
of whom:		
Women	43%	50%
Men	57%	50%
of whom:		
Foreigners	23.6%	4.31%
Youth (under 20 years old)	2.2%	2.2%
Persons looking for part-time employment	6%	2.6%

Source: Landesarbeitsamt Berlin-Brandenburg: Presseinformation, Arbeitsmarktzahlen Dezember 1996.

Unemployment as an indicator of social segregation is also spatially reflected in the western districts of the city. Most districts with a large migrant/ethnic minority population register particularly high rates of unemployment among the total

4 The development was similar in the FRG:

Table 1: Unemployment in western Germany (yearly average)

	Total		Foreigners	
	number	**rate**	**number**	**rate**
1988	2.24 million	8.7%	270,000	14.4%
1989	2.04 million	7.9%	233,000	12.2%
1990	1.88 million	7.2%	203,000	10.9%
1991	1.69 million	6.3%	208,000	10.7%
1992	1.81 million	6.6%	254,000	12.2%
1993	2.27 million	8.2%	345,000	15.1%
1994	2.56 million	9.2%	409,000	16.2%
1995	2.56 million	9.3%	424,000	16.6%

Source: Amtliche Nachrichten der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, 44. Jg., Sondernummer - Arbeitsstatistik 1995 - Jahreszahlen, Nuremberg, 30. September 1996.

Clearly, unemployment decreased only for a short period immediately after reunification. This positive change was less significant and briefer for foreigners than on average.

work force. Kreuzberg, the district with the highest share of foreign population (one-third), is an outstanding example for this tendency: one out of four of the work force is unemployed (Landesarbeitsamt Berlin-Brandenburg 1997).

Self-employment as the ideal solution?

The promotion of self-employment is one of the options that attracts the attention of policy-makers in periods of labour market crisis. The Berlin Senate, the city's government, is currently supporting self-employment and small enterprises by way of special programs. Such attempts in the political arena to cope with unemployment focus on programs that open up opportunities for enterprises to hire long-term unemployed for training by using public funds to cover (part of) their wages (*Arbeitsbeschaffungsmaßnahmen*). Moreover, unemployed persons can - under specific conditions - capitalise their unemployment benefits for a certain period as a kind of start-up support for self-employment.

Access to entrepreneurship is different for migrants/ethnic minorities than for Germans, both as regards the "sticks" and the "carrots". Apart from the higher social prestige of self-employment (compared to the status of worker or clerk) in some national cultures - as is repeatedly reported by Turks and Greeks - it may be one of the rare options in cases of unemployment. The latter holds true for non-EU nationals (to which group the Greek, the Spanish and the Portuguese belonged until the 1980s), given that they would risk their authorisation to stay in the country on becoming dependent on social welfare after expiry of their eligibility for unemployment benefits.

In general, the regulations for self-employment in Germany do not differentiate between "nationals" and "foreigners", except for the prerequisite that the latter must have a residence permit (*Aufenthaltsberechtigung*). However, some business sectors are almost closed to or very hard to access for "foreigners" because specific certificates are required for entry or because there are sophisticated skill demands. The prominent example for the first case are craftshops, which can only be run with a *Meisterbrief* (master craftsman's diploma); a representative example for the second case is the food sector, where a variety of hygiene and other regulations are in force.

In Berlin - as more generally throughout Germany - foreigners began to enter self-employment in the late 1970s, already responding to the increasing risk of unemployment. This is not to deny that the hope of attaining a better standard of living for themselves and their families was an important motivation for the migrants, too. For want of specific data on Berlin, we will briefly describe the developments in western Germany, as the data situation is better there.

The number of foreigners who are self-employed has risen steadily in the Federal Republic. In 1970 it was nearly 51,000 or 3% of all working foreigners; at the beginning of the 1980s the number had doubled and the share reached nearly 5% (Statistisches Bundesamt 1995b). During this period the German population exhibited a slight reduction in self-employment, both in absolute numbers of self-employed and as share of all employed - a trend that was reversed only after reunification (see Table 3). The percentage of foreigners among all self-employed increased between 1978 and 1995 from 2.7% to 7.3%, while the share of foreign wage-earners only rose from 8.5% to 10.1%.

Table 3: Self-employment in western Germany 1981-1995

	1981		1985		1989		1995	
	number	**rate**	**number**	**rate**	**number**	**rate**	**number**	**rate**
Germans	3.1 million	12.3%	3.0 million	12.2%	2.9 million	11.2%	3.1 million	11.6%
Foreigners	102,000	4.7%	140,000	6.9%	151,000	7.1%	242,000	8.5%

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt: Fachserie 1 - Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit, Reihe 4.1.1 - Stand und Entwicklung der Erwerbstätigkeit 1982, 1987, 1990 und 1996.

This development is a result of changing conditions among which legal restrictions, such as different types of residence permits linked to the length of stay, are of critical relevance. Moreover, the market has also expanded. With the growing foreign population, demand was rising for products that were not produced on the spot but had to be imported. After an initial phase of serving for the co-ethnics, the product often turned out to be also attractive for the native population. Last but not least, rising unemployment - especially among foreigners, as documented above - is known to have an impact on the decision to start a business (Gieseck and von Loeffelholz 1994).

Representative surveys in the Federal Republic of Germany indicate that the motivation for self-employment is actually much stronger among migrants/ethnic minorities than among Germans: 5.8% compared to 2.5% of the Germans declared that they intend to start a business in the near future (Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1989). However, the share of self-employed among the population between 15 and 65 years is still lower for the migrants/ethnic minorities than for the local population, which is in contrast to the situation in the U.S. (Light and Rosenstein 1995: 202).

It is open whether the structure and dynamics of the ethnic economy in Berlin parallel those of western Germany in general. As specific data for Berlin are not yet available, we will sketch the social characteristics of entrepreneurs in western Germany. In 1995 self-employment was most attractive for people in the age groups 35 to 45 among foreigners as well as among Germans. 47% of the German self-employed were younger than 45, but so were two-thirds of the foreign self-employed. The share of female entrepreneurs (28%) was lower among the foreign than among the German self-employed (34%) (Statistisches

Bundesamt 1995a). Although the European integration process is said to be highly relevant for these developments, two out of three foreign entrepreneurs were non-EU nationals in 1992. Nearly half of the foreign self-employed came from Italy, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia, the former *Anwerbeländer* (recruitment countries) (von Loeffelholz, Gieseck and Buch 1994: 32).

For Berlin, at least data on recent trends in the self-employment of German and foreign citizens are available through the statistics on registrations of newly established and wound-up businesses.[5] In the period from 1991 to 1994 registrations in the manufacturing sector, trade and insurance declined, while registrations in the construction and service sectors rose. In total, the numbers of registrations in that period do not vary significantly. However, it was only foreigners who markedly increased their activities as regards self-employment. In 1991 the registered number of new firms in foreign ownership was 3,867 (German firms: 39,906); in 1995 the number of newly registered firms run by foreigners amounted to 5,302 (German firms: 38,921).[6]

The total number of self-employed among migrants/ethnic minorities in Berlin showed a remarkable growth of more than 40% during the early 1990s: from 9,300 in 1991 to 13,300 in 1993 (Senat von Berlin 1995). In the same period self-employment among the indigenous population was in decline. This development can also be observed in the domain of restaurants and hotels, where the share of foreigners rose from 26% in 1991 to 31% in 1995. However, on average, firms with a foreign owner show higher fluctuations and shorter life cycles than firms in German ownership (von Loeffelholz, Gieseck and Buch 1994: 33).

[5] Our empirical basis are the official data on registrations and cancellations from the Statistical Office in Berlin. They are differentiated according to seven economic sectors and provide separate figures for "eastern" nationalities only since 1991 (Statistisches Landesamt Berlin 1996).

[6] Migrants from central eastern Europe are increasingly engaging in self-employment. The business activities of the Poles are centred in the western districts (about 70%). Trade accounts for the highest share but also has above-average closure rates, whereas construction exhibits the highest growth rate. Similarly, most of the business activities of people from the former Soviet Union are in trade, but their shops are highly concentrated in the eastern districts of the city (about two out of three). The percentage of failures is rising rather rapidly.

Ethnic business in the food sector (Germany and Berlin)

The activities of foreigners as entrepreneurs in the food sector in Germany are concentrated mainly in two sectors: retail trade and restaurants/hotels.

Although "ethnic food" is established in all developed countries, the proliferation of this sector in Germany is rather surprising in view of the extraordinarily tough competition in the German market. While the degree of concentration on the manufacturing side is not very strong, the food-retailing business is highly concentrated and many of the functions of wholesalers have been shifted to retailers. At present, there are about 5,000 companies in food production with 528,000 employees; each year around 200 firms close down, affecting 8,000 jobs. In contrast, on the retailer side 80% of yearly turnover (DM 230 billion) is on the books of the ten biggest companies (Frankfurter Rundschau, January 16, 1997). Interaction between producers and retailers is based more on informal, economic links than on formal, legal bonds (Kaas 1993: 743) - a constellation which requires specific investments from both sides in physical and human capital. Although the retailer has a stronger position in the relationship than the producer, both partners have to maintain a precarious balance between cooperation and conflict. Because the food market as a whole will contract in the future, the struggle over the division of costs and risks will intensify even further (op. cit.: 746). The process of European integration will add to this pressure as mergers and acquisitions will increasingly be on a transnational level (Weindlmaier 1992: 484). Taking into account changes in the composition and tastes of consumers, strategies of market segmentation will have to be paralleled by firm decisions whether to use costs/prices or, alternatively, quality as strategic market parameters; so far competition has been focussed largely on prices (op. cit.: 488).

The retail trade, especially in food, was one of the areas where migrant/ethnic minority business started to flourish rather early in the Federal Republic, despite the very strong competition among German food retail shops. In 1992 the number of foreign-owned companies in this sector was around 43,000, accounting for over 20% of all foreigners who were self-employed. There are different factors involved in this phenomenon: the ethnic community as customers, low capital and skills prerequisites and - to some extent at least - a substitution of German enterprises. It cannot be overlooked, however, that these shops often provide only marginal income (von Loeffelholz, Gieseck and Buch 1994: 56 f.).

One of the major "customers" of the food-production industry, the restaurant sector, has developed a polarised structure during recent decades in Germany. In contrast to the traditional restaurants a new type, so-called systematic gastronomy, has mushroomed since the early 1970s, when the first McDonald's restaurant opened (op. cit.: 11; 24 ff.).[7]

The variety in the restaurant sector has been enriched by foreign entrepreneurs. Migrants/ethnic minorities have managed to gain quite a strong foothold in the restaurant and hotel sector. In fact, a nation-wide process of ethnicisation of this part of the food sector is documented since the 1960s, starting with Italians and followed by Turks, Greeks, Yugoslavs and - more recently - Chinese, Japanese, Syrians, Indians and Thais (Stavrinoudi 1992). In 1992, 55,000 foreign restaurants were counted in western Germany - comprising 26% of all firms in this sector - providing about 100,000 jobs and additionally employing 27,000 family members (von Loeffelholz, Gieseck and Buch 1994: 78). Foreign restaurants are characteristically small or medium-sized companies with a rather high rate of fluctuation, especially among those operating on a lease basis (about 60%) (Stavrinoudi 1992: 8 f.). There are no statistical data available concerning the structure of the sector, except in some German cities (Hamburg, Bielefeld, Ludwigshafen, Nuremberg). Based on this fragmentary information, the Italians and Greeks can be said to represent the largest groups in this sector. Together with Turks and people from the former Yugoslavia, they accounted for about 80% of all foreign restaurants/hotels in the early 1990s. Low financial, legal and skills barriers and the availability of co-ethnics as customers, but also the increasing taste for "exotic" food among the Germans, are given as the main causes for this development (von Loeffelholz, Gieseck and Buch 1994: 57-61).

Even at a very early stage DEHOGA - the association of German hotel and restaurant owners - warned that the growing availability of "foreign *cuisine*" might lead to critical developments, arguing that the relevant market was limited (Stavrinoudi 1992: 30). However, no analysis is available as to whether and to what extent the competitive pressure has increased; in fact, both economic conditions and consumer tastes have changed too. Light and Rosenstein document that in U.S. metropolitan areas immigrant entrepreneurs were creating new economic opportunities without jeopardising the material welfare of others (Light and Rosenstein 1995: 202).

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[7] **Table 4: Sales of fast-food suppliers in Germany (1994)**

Company	**turnover** **(DM millions)**	**number of firms**
McDonald's Deutschland	2,600	570
Mitropa AG/DSG mbH	529	597
Mövenpick Gesellschaften	359	45
Nordsee Dt. Hochseefischerei	356	292
Burger King GmbH	340	94
Wienerwald GmbH	233	170

Source: Seidel-Pielen (1996): 13.

In the following we present some empirical studies on specific ethnic economies in western Berlin, a selectivity based on the very uneven distribution of the migrant/ethnic minority population between the western and eastern districts of the city. Thus, it is no surprise that the ethnic economy has also been quite unevenly distributed up to now. By far the largest share of ethnic business is concentrated in the western districts of Berlin; those businesses that recently opened up in the east are often branches of firms located in the west. This imbalance is clearly an echo of the past, when the migration regulations in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were much more restrictive than those of the Federal Republic. Our analysis is limited to the former *Anwerbeländer* Turkey, Italy and Greece. We add a short overview about the situation in eastern Berlin.

The Italian economy in Berlin

From the outset, Italian migrants to Berlin, as to Germany, were looking for economic niches in specific professions: terrazzo techniques and other specialised handicraft skills in the construction sector were as typical as self-employment in the food sector. After World War II the catering trade, gastronomy and the import of Italian products remained the most important fields of activity - alongside construction and the textile industry. In the 1960s there were about 20 Italian restaurants in Berlin, while today their number is estimated at around 1,000. Italian restaurants (often *pizzerias*) mushroomed especially during the 1970s, when many Italians (formerly employed in the German manufacturing or construction sector) started to run their own business as an escape from unemployment. The adoption of the pizza to German consumer tastes, low prices for this kind of food and the increased tourism of Germans to Italy contributed to the success story of the Italian food culture. In this period the sector underwent important changes: non-Italians (mainly Turks and Arabs) also started to invest in *pizzerias*. Many of the Italian owners, who tried to maintain their traditional food style, resorted to employing cheaper labour from other countries. Pichler (1995) observes an adaptation in Italian restaurants in the 1980s to more "post-modern" and upgraded consumer tastes, like a wider choice of vegetarian food on the menu or stressing the "real Italian atmosphere". Some bars offered additional forms of ethnic business besides the normal routines (libraries, language courses or films in Italian). Parallel to this "culturalisation" of the restaurants another trend evolved in reaction to McDonald's: snack *pizzerias* spread. Moreover, new branches of established Italian restaurants proliferated.

The import of Italian vegetables and, more generally, Italian specialities grew very rapidly in the 1980s. Previously, imports were restricted to deliveries to restaurants and to some kinds of wine for the gastronomy sector. Competition between German and Italian wholesalers intensified when Italian gastronomy turned out to be a lucrative source of income. Increased specialisation among the Italian wholesalers was chosen as the preferred strategy to protect the market.

The Turkish economy in Berlin

An empirical study of the situation of the Turkish economy in (western) Berlin, based on 634 *Döner* snack-bars (50% of the sample), Turkish restaurants and greengrocers, reported for the year 1990 that 20% were located in Kreuzberg, 18% in Neukölln and 17% in Wedding. This distribution corresponds exactly to the concentration of the Turkish community in Berlin. The peripheral districts of Berlin showed only a low share of Turkish restaurants - mainly *Döner* snack-bars established during the second half of the 1980s as a first step towards the institution of Turkish gastronomy (Scholz 1990).

In the mid 1990s the Turkish gastronomy created outlets in the eastern districts of Berlin. There is anecdotal evidence that a number of the Turkish groceries, restaurants and *Döner* snack-bars from the west have opened branches in the east. While this was initially an expansion strategy, later it became instrumental as an opportunity for the second and third generations to build up their own business[8].

This predominance of *Döner* snack-bars within the Turkish food-related economy is still relevant today and is a typical Berlin institution: out of 1,146 enterprises registered in the Turkish yellow pages (Is rehberi 1996) nearly 20% are *Döner* snack-bars. In 1991 there was the first serious attempt to standardise the product: the recipe for the *Döner* ("*Berliner Verkehrsauffassung*" - accepted Berlin standard) was discussed in 1996 as the *Döner-Reinheitsgebot* (purity law). As for fast and snack-food, *Döner* have largely displaced the German *Wurst* and sell better than hamburgers. Berlin is the city where the *Döner* tradition is best established: 25 tons of *Döner* are sold here daily compared to 35 tons in the new *Bundesländer* and 140 tons in the old *Bundesländer*.

Within the Turkish food sector in Berlin the following ranking of activities can be observed on the basis of the yellow pages:

[8] This is said to be part of a broader labour market trend concerning the new flows of migrants: many restaurants and snack-bars have opened in the eastern districts of Berlin, and very often the personnel are migrants from eastern Europe.

Table 5: Turkish enterprises in the Berlin food sector

Activity	Number of references
Snack-bars	422
Food retailers	204
Restaurants	150
Bakeries	113
Bistros	78
Turkish cafés	39
Fruit and vegetable wholesalers	38
Döner production	35
Butchers	17
Beverage wholesale	17
Dance bars	17
Others	16
Total	1,146

Source: Branchenbuch (1996) Is rehberi.

This means that nearly every second of all registered Turkish firms belonged to the food sector. In response to the favourable reception of the *Döner*, Turkish bakeries also started to flourish and expand. A study on the well-known Turkish market at Maybachufer observes that in the 1980s the Turkish products were mainly oriented towards Turkish customers and that packaged food was increasingly sold (Spies 1988). Interestingly, the presence of Turkish suppliers changed the structure of the products offered by German suppliers. Many of the latter added products addressing the needs of the Turkish clientele. Turks employed at the market stands are said to be often students or part-time workers.

The Greek economy in Berlin

The Greek community has an old tradition in Berlin. Some of the first immigrants at the turn of the century were employed in the Greek tobacco industry, including sales. Up to the 1960s immigration from Greece to Berlin was limited, in part because of Greek memories of Nazi *Zwangsarbeiter (forced labourers).* Greece was not yet a member of the EEC when the German *Gastarbeiter* system was introduced; thus, it would have been difficult to set up in self-employment for legal reasons (or it would only have been possible through front men). The first Greek restaurant in Berlin was opened in 1967 and targeted mainly Greek consumers. Greek food suppliers did not exist in Berlin at this time and the fact that Berlin's geographical and political position was not "secure" played an important role in the rather slow evolution of the Greek gastronomic economy. Stavrinoudi (1992) counts around 6 Greek restaurants in Berlin in 1975, most of them established by first-generation migrants. Since the late 1980s a more dense network of suppliers, restaurants and retailers has developed.[9]

This overview of the development of ethnic business in the Berlin food sector was perforce rather sketchy because it had to be based on existing case studies. It is nonetheless possible to identify some links to the cycles of the German economy and the corresponding phases of migration regulations. It is no surprise that Italians were among the first foreigners to open restaurants in Berlin during the 1960s. The bilateral *Gastarbeiter* contract with Italy in 1955 was the first (of a series of eight), and Italy was the only EC member among the *Anwerbeländer* at that time.

The first wave of growth of Italian and Greek restaurants in the 1970s has to be interpreted in the context of the recession of the German economy late in the 1960s and the cessation of active recruitment of Gastarbeiter since autumn 1973. The first fact led to disproportionate rates of unemployment among former Gastarbeiter, thus creating an impetus for self-employment. The second fact contributed - unintentionally - to a rise in the non-German population and thus increased the numbers of co-ethnic customers.

The mushrooming and diversification of firms in the food sector in Italian, Greek and Turkish ownership during the 1980s reflects the more stable settlement of the so-called second generation. It was also supported by a rising demand among German consumers.

The fall of the Wall in 1989 has fundamentally changed the landscape in two major respects: opening up new possibilities in the eastern districts, but also notably increasing the competitive pressure in the west because of new business opportunities in the face of shrinking effective demand due to the labour market crisis.

The eastern part of Berlin is still marked by its socialist past. Restaurants, bars and cafés are concentrated along the main roads and traffic junctions and since recently also in the area around Kollwitzplatz and in the inner city (Mitte). Inside the inner S-Bahn (suburban rail) ring restaurants are almost evenly distributed, while within the outer S-Bahn ring and in the *Plattenbausiedlungen* (high-density settlements) only a very poor gastronomic infrastructure has been established. *Döner* snack-bars are owned and managed exclusively by Turks. Chinese restaurants and Asian snack-bars are often managed by migrants from

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9 Now MEVGAL, a Greek dairy trader, also delivers Greek products to German supermarkets. These recent trends of integration of "ethnic products" into the permanent range of goods offered by supermarkets are still restricted to urban or bourgeois residential areas, where people have gradually become accustomed to such items. Whether the establishment of "ethnic products" in supermarkets represents a long-term market strategy or is a response to local consumer demand is an open question among experts on the food sector.

Vietnam and Taiwan, while *pizzerias* are run by various nationalities (Müller and Janzen 1994). Indian and Thai food has become *en vogue* especially in the area of Prenzlauer Berg during the last two years. Most foreign owners of restaurants in eastern Berlin are Turkish, Chinese, Vietnamese or Italian.

Concluding Remarks

We started with the argument that in Germany and - more specifically - in Berlin access to ethnic business was not necessarily confined to a switch from (impending) unemployment or marginal employment to marginal business; it was also a possible route to advancement. However, the fragmented data available (including some sectoral case studies) indicate that the historically contingent nature of the processes can hardly be overemphasised. As we have tried to demonstrate, factors of critical importance were the restrictions imposed by the migration regime, the relative position of the ethnic minority groups (especially concerning restrictions for non-EU nationals) and the overall structure of opportunities in the host society. It is no surprise that in Berlin - as in other big cities in industrialised countries - ethnic business has come to be quite strongly represented in the food sector, which offers markets characterised by relatively low barriers concerning financial and specific human-capital needs. Moreover, their small size, heterogeneity and susceptibility to flux limit the potential for mass production and mass distribution - at least in some segments (Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward 1990: 47).

The various groups of migrants/ethnic minorities obviously have taken different routes and chosen specific strategies in order to integrate themselves in the German/Berlin economy. The food sector was and is one of those areas where at least the former *Gastarbeiter* have taken advantage of the special opportunities open to them. It must be stressed, however, that the major part of the research still has to be done with the aim of identifying more precisely the characteristics of ethnic business activities; whether it is more likely to be a trap than a bridge for the ethnic entrepreneurs, and to what extent it represents a dynamic factor in Berlin’s future as a capital city.

And apart from asking whether self-employment has been the ideal path to successful integration in the German labour market, the individual and collective strategies of the migrants to establish themselves in this segment remain to be analysed. If ethnicity is identified as an organising feature of labour in the food sector in the United States, with its liberal employment regime, does this also hold true for Germany with its highly regulated labour markets? Which kind of immigrant labour is absorbed? What about the role of the so-called second or even third generation in this sector? Are the ethnicised labour markets also segmented according to gender? What is needed in order to explore these questions more thoroughly and empirically is "field work" in a defined urban space, taking into consideration both demand- and supply-side factors and dynamics. Presumably, processes of economic restructuring and internationalisation are reflected at all levels of economic activity in the food sector. It is our conjecture that this sector is a promising subject for research in this regard: on one hand, it is one of the most traditional sectors of self-employment for migrants/ethnic minorities; on the other hand, it is characterised by a high level of informalisation and considerable absorption capacities for cheap labour.

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